

South Bottoms Historic District
Henry Sharton House
709 South 1st Street
Lincoln
Lancaster County
Nebraska

HABS No. NE-43-C

HABS
NEB,
55-LINC,
6C-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

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NEB,
55-LINC
6C-

HENRY SHARTON HOUSE

Location: 709 South 1st Street, Lincoln,
Lancaster, Co., Nebraska
(South Bottoms Historic District)

Present Owner: City of Lincoln

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of
Significance: The Henry Sharton house is closely
associated with the predominant
Volga-German culture of the South
Bottoms Historic District. It
represents a particularly interesting
episode in the Volga-German-American
architecture of the district,
representing both in its original
construction, and its later re-building,
explicit Volga-German architectural
preferences.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

1. Original and Subsequent Owners: Lots South ten feet of 8, 9,
North six and one-fourth feet of 10, Eaton's Subdivision, City
of Lincoln

1888 Plat No. 434 June 8, 1888, Book 2 page 206, Lots 1-12
Annie J. Eaton & O. W. Eaton
to
the public

1888 Deed June 24, 1888, Book 59 page 356, Lots 3-9 (p)10
Annie J. Eaton & O. W. Eaton
to
Lincoln Pottery Co.
\$10,000

1896 Warranty Deed February 13, 1896, Book 85 page 325
Lots 3-9 (p)10
Lincoln Pottery Co. et al
to
First National Bank, Lincoln, Nebraska
\$3,000

1901 Sheriff's Deed May 20, 1901, Book 91 page 579
Lots 3-9 (p)10
B. S. Branson, Sheriff
to
First National Bank, Lincoln, Nebraska

- \$905'
(Bought at public auction after Pottery Company defaulted on payments)
- 1901 Quitclaim Deed June 20, 1901, Book 103 page 301
Lots 3-9 (p)10
First National Bank, Lincoln
to
Webster Eaton
- 1905 Warranty Deed July 31, 1905, Book 127 page 60,
Lots 7-9 (p)10
Webster Eaton & Wife (Nellie)
to
Frederick Hanneman
\$487.50
- 1905 Mortgage July 31, 1905, Book 146 page 34, Lots 7-9
(p)10
Frederick Hanneman & Wife (Celia)
to
Lazard Cahn
\$350
- 1906 Release Book August 18, 1906, 137 page 614,
Lots 7-9 (p)10
Lazard Cahn
to
Frederick Hanneman
- 1906 Warranty Deed August 6, 1906, Book 136 page 153
Lots 7-9 (p)10
Frederick Hanneman & Wife (Celia)
to
Henry Scharton
\$825
- 1911 Relinquish Agmt. May 12, 1911, Book Q page 550,
Lots (p)8,9, (p)10
Henry Scharton
to
Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad
\$200
Railroad grade causing water damage to property
- 1948 Award Certificate June 25, 1948, Book 499 page 338,
Lots (p)8,9,(p)10
Department of Assistance
to
Katherine Stroh
- 1960 Assistance Lien August 30, 1960, Book 782 page 507,
Lots (p)8,9, (p)10
Lancaster County Board
to Katherine Stroh

- 1965 Award Certificate November 23, 1965, Book 922 page 399,
Lots (p)8,9,(p)10
Department of Public Welfare
to
Katherine Stroh
- 1975 Notice June 18, 1975, Book 75 page 9435, Lots
(p)8,9,(p)10
City of Lincoln
to
Howard W. Lehl
Building inspection - "Is a dangerous building under
section 302 of the Dangerous Building Code."
- 1976 Sheriff's Deed July 27, 1976, Book 76 page 20294,
Lots (p)8,9,(p)10
Lancaster County Sheriff
to
Howard W. Lehl
\$50
- 1978 Mortgage August 25, 1978, Book 78 page 22581,
Lots 7-9 (p)10
Howard W. Lehl & Wife
to
Eagle State Bank
\$10,000
- 1978 Release October 3, 1978, Book 78 page 26468,
Lots 7-9 (p)10
Eagle State Bank
to
Howard W. Lehl & Wife
- 1978 Mortgage August 25, 1978, Book 78 page 26469,
Lots (p)8,9,(p)10
Howard W. Lehl & Wife
to
Eagle State Bank
\$10,000
- 1986 Warranty Deed, March 25, 1986, Book 86 page 251,
Lots 7-9 (p)10
Howard W. Lehl & Patricia Lehl
to
City of Lincoln
\$14,5000
- 1986 Release March 26, 1986, Book 86 page 25180,
Lots 8-9 (p)10
Eagle State Bank
to
Howard W. Lehl & Patricia

2. Date of Erection: Before 1906.

3. Alterations and Additions: Architectural evidence suggests that the house underwent numerous physical changes although precise sequences and time-frames may be impossible to determine. Four construction episodes are revealed in the material evidence.

The first episode is the construction of a narrow, two-room dwelling currently comprising the north one-half of the main core of the present house. The evidence suggests that it was built elsewhere, possibly nearby on 137 J Street, and moved to the present site to make way for the new Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad main line. The distinctly non-right angles of the walls suggest that the house "racked" slightly during the move, and that the foundations were built to accommodate this condition. The brick-nogging also suggests a nineteenth century construction date.

The second construction episode appears to be the kitchen "wing". Primary evidence results from the precise east-west alignment of the kitchen with the "original" two rooms and the corresponding non-right angle "racking of the walls".

Episode three involved the addition of the southern tier of rooms to the northern tier, creating a new main body for the house. This and the final episode of construction may have occurred between 1913 and 1927. This tier of rooms may have been somewhat taller than the original thus necessitating the addition of approximately 47 cm of height to the original two-room section. Studs and a new plate were added to the top of the original plate in the brick nogged section. The old gable roof was removed, and a new, steeply-pitched hipped roof was built to unite the two constructions, creating a totally new image for the house.

The final episode consisted of the construction of the mud-porch, including the stairway to the basement. This episode marked a change in use of this space from a cellar, with trap-door access through the kitchen floor, to an internal summer kitchen with access via stairway. It seems likely that the kitchen flue was rebuilt at this time, since the flue had to be extended to pick up the vent in the summer kitchen. The summer beam may have been inserted at this time also, since it rests upon the flue support at its west end.

At some time subsequent to the fourth episode, an enclosed closet was inserted into the mud-porch space. The walls of the closet were sheathed with car siding. Presumably at about the same time, car siding was placed as a ceiling material in the summer kitchen.

A final remodeling occurred c.1958 in association with the installation of indoor plumbing. A toilet room was created by adding a drywall partition in the central of the northern tier of rooms, creating hallway access to the kitchen from the front part of the house. A sink was also placed on the east kitchen

wall at this time.

4. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Structure: It is probable that Frederick Hanneman moved the original two-room portion of the house to this site in 1906. It was purchased by Henry Scharton the same year and he lived at the house on and off until taking up permanent residence in 1915.

According to the 1910 Census Mr. Scharton, listed as a widower, lived at the residence with his mother and five children. He had immigrated to the United States from Russia in 1891 and was living in Lincoln by 1897. By 1913 he had remarried and brought two step-children and another child of his own into the home. According to the 1913 Census Scharton had spent five years in the beet fields and was working for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad.

After Henry Scharton's death his widow lived in the house until 1945. The Stroh family lived in the house from 1947 to 1966 after which it stood vacant.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

1. Architectural Interest and Merit: The Henry Scharton house is an exceptionally significant manifestation of Volga-German culture in the South Bottoms Historic District. It is one of the finest examples of the characteristic German-Russian four-room plans in the community. Of particular note is the complex history of changes made to the house which provide compelling testimony to the additive and reconstructive nature of folk building practices in the community. While the additive nature of folk building practices has received considerable attention nationwide, that of reconstruction has not. The Scharton house reveals the skill with which folk builders did rebuild, producing a second generation dwelling which was as culturally distinct a product as was the original construction.

2. Condition of the Fabric: Poor (to be demolished).

3. Summary Description: The Henry Scharton house is a one-story rectangular mass measuring eight and one-half by seven meters, covered with a steeply-pitched hipped roof. Extending from the rear (west) is a lower kitchen wing with gable roof, to which is attached on the south an enclosed shed-roofed mud-porch. The entire house rests on a raised foundation.

4. Description of Exterior: The main body of the house is oriented latitudinally, the longer dimension forming the front (east) facade. The front is symmetrically arranged in three bays, with the entrance in the center. A frontal shed-roofed porch extends nearly across the full facade, supported on four turned columns and two pilasters. Above, in the roof, is a large pediment dormer, decorated with a cornice and fish-scale shingles, and containing a single, central window. A diminutive

dormer with small window is located on the west slope of the roof.

Exterior walls are sheathed in clapboard throughout, and are enhanced at the corners with plain board pilasters. A wide board cornice and water table complete the wall treatment of the main core. Windows are double-hung of one-over-one configuration.

Structurally the south one-half of the main core and rear kitchen wing are of simple wood frame construction. The north one-half of the main core is constructed of full dimension 4x9 cm studs spaced on 41 cm centers, with the spaces in the perimeter nogged with brick. Floor joists are full-dimension 5x13's, spaced variously on 57 to 65 cm centers.

Most of the foundations consist of sandstone below grade topped with three courses of concrete block. A small section of more recent date (enclosed mud-porch) is constructed of hollow clay tile topped with concrete block.

5. Description of Interior: Only a crawl space exists under the main core of the house. The area beneath the west wing has been excavated to a low room height. Remnants of a brick floor, car siding on the ceiling and some small patches of original paint on the interior wall surfaces indicate that the room was finished.

The main level of the core is a simple four room plan, the rooms being nearly equal in size. The south tier, slightly larger than the north, contains a formal parlor on the front and informal living area behind. The north tier contains a bedroom, bathroom and very narrow, steep boxed stair to the loft. The wing extending from the rear (west) of the core and aligning precisely with the north tier of rooms contains the kitchen. This wing also contains a mud-porch and stair to the basement. Regular door openings provide access between rooms, except between the southern two rooms where a wide opening, complete with curtain rod, provides access.

Interior finishes consist of lath and painted plaster. Woodwork is plain and is also finished with paint. The kitchen is more elaborate, exhibiting beaded-board wainscoting topped with a molded chair rail. A cupboard is built into the south wall of the kitchen, borrowing space from the mud-porch. A brick chimney flue runs from floor to ceiling along the west kitchen wall.

6. Orientation, Setting and Outbuildings: The house is located in the northwest portion of the South Bottoms Historic District and faces east on South 1st Street. The property is bounded by the Popp-Fries house (documentation included) on the north, a vacant lot on the west and the Worster-Gert house (documentation included) on the south.

None of the outbuildings, shown on a 1927 Sanborn map, currently exist.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Interview:

Murphy, Dave, Lincoln, Nebraska State Historical Society.
Personal conversation with H. Keith Sawyers, August 1986.

Records:

Building Permits, Building Permits and Inspections
Administration, City of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Lancaster County Assessment Books and Tax Lists 1905-1929,
County Assessor's Office, Lincoln, Nebraska, and State Archives,
Nebraska State Historical Society.

Murphy, Dave and Kathleen Fimple, "South Bottoms Historic
District, Lincoln, Nebraska," National Register of Historic
Places - Inventory Nomination Form. Lincoln, Nebraska: Nebraska
State Historical Society, 1986.

Polk's Lincoln City Directory, Lincoln, Nebraska: Polk-
McAvoy, 1908 - .

Records of Deeds, Clerk of the County Court, Lancaster
County, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Sanborn Map Company, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Lincoln,
Nebraska. New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, 1903,
1927.

US Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29 (Lancaster County),
624, Roll 849-850. Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910.

William, Hattie Plum and Jacob J. Stroh, "Census of the
German-Russian Population, Lincoln, Nebraska". State Archives,
Nebraska State Historical Society, Micro.#7369.

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